

To the KING and both Houses of Parliament,

(Who have made Laws and Decrees, and caused them to be put in Execution, to prohibit People from having the *Liberty of their Consciences* in the Exercise of the *Worship of GOD*) This is sent as *A WARNING* from the LORD.



FRIENDS,

WHat do you mean by these Practices? or what do you expect to bring to pass by these your Undertakings and Proceedings? Do you think thereby to root out the Holy Seed and Royal Off-spring of God, which he hath raised and brought forth in these North parts of the World, to rule and reign (according to his Promise made by the Mouths of his Prophets in Ages past) to which Nations must bow and bend, and become subject; I tell you plainly and truly, that if this be your Expectation (which your proceedings give me cause to believe it is) you will certainly fail therein; And God will assuredly frustrate these your Expectations, and by this very way and means that you take to suppress and root out the People of God from having a being amongst you, even thereby you will provoke the Lord to root you out, if you persist therein: Wherefore beware, lest that which you think (and expect) to bring upon the People of God, be by the Hand of God brought upon your selves. For (be it known unto you) the Lord God Almighty is with his People of a truth, whom you have turned your Sword and Power against; and what is done unto them, he certainly takes as done unto himself; and in as much as you go about to suppress his People, or to limit them in the exercise of their Consciences towards God, you therein are found fighters against God, and thereby you go about to stop and hinder the work of God; which will be as hard for you to do, as it was for *Saul* to kick against the pricks of the Witness of God in his own Conscience: Wherefore consider these things, and remember that many Warnings and tender Visitations of Love the Lord hath sent unto you in times past (which you have little regarded hitherto, but go on exercising Cruelty towards the People of God) And now at this time also I am moved (and it is upon my heart) by the Spirit of the Lord, to lay these things before you, and do tell you in plainness what the Lord will do and bring to pass in despite of all that you can do who seek to oppose him: For, notwithstanding the many Laws and Decrees which you have made or shall make, yet the Work of the Lord which he hath certainly begun, that shall go on and increase, and the Truth must flourish and prosper, and spread forth its self, and the Kingdoms of the World must become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, according to his Promise; and they that will not bow unto his Throne and Government, who is KING of Kings, (whose right it is to rule in the Consciences of people, and to bear the Government there, and to exercise them in matters of Worship towards God) but will seek to stop and limit him and his Government there, even such must and shall be broken by him, and bruised under by his eternal Power; the Lord hath said and spoken it, and it must come to pass.

Wherefore Friends, be you once more warned that you meddle no more with the Consciences of People, so as to go about to limit them in matters relating to the Service of God (for it's not the place of a Civil Magistrate to meddle or have to do with those things) but leave them free in those things to do as they are perswaded in their own Consciences by the Light of the Spirit of the Lord; for you cannot give an account unto God for them if they do amiss, but they must all (and so must you also) give an account unto God, every one for himself: And this is just and equal (in things of this nature) every one should be left to the exercise of the Spirit of the Lord in his own heart; because that Spiritual Worship consisteth in obedience to the Spirit of God, and you your selves would not be willing to be prohibited from, or denied of this Liberty; but (I dare say) you would look upon it to be a very great Oppression unto you, to be restrained (by any Civil Power or Government) from that, which by the Spirit and Power of God you were perswaded in your Consciences you ought to do; and you could not but judge that those (who should go about to lay or impose such a Restriction upon you) did do unto you as they themselves would not be done by, and so ye might well conclude that it were unrighteousness in them so to do: Wherefore if you seriously consider whether this Unrighteousness and Oppression be not found in you, I know you cannot but lay your hands upon your mouths and confess, *Guilty*.

So let my Counsel be (at this time) received by you, and take my Advice (as one that hath received the Counsel of the Lord, and (in measure) knows the mind of the Lord by the revelation of his Spirit as touching this matter) that is this: Take your selves out of these cruel practices of persecuting about Religion and Worship, and lay aside these cruel Impositions, which are and have been laid upon the People of God, by reason whereof many (who are dear unto the Lord) have suffered very greatly; some the loss of their Liberties, and some the loss of their Lives, occasioned through being thrust together in noisom Holes and Prisons, and others are obnoxious to Exilement from their Wives and Children, and from their Native Country & dearest Relations, and no evil at all justly charged against any of these, for which these cruel Sufferings are inflicted upon them; 'tis only for worshipping God in Spirit that these Sufferings are sustained by them, that is the greatest Charge that hath been by you at all proved against them; and for these things saith the Lord's Controversie is certainly great with you, and will you continue in these things through which you have provoked the Lord to anger? His Wrath will not be appeased towards you, neither can your Government be established in safety, nor you cannot establish your selves in safety and security, for fear will surprize you (while you go on in these practices) because of the guilt that is upon your Consciences; and although we cannot, neither do we desire to make outward opposition against you by Plottings and Insurrections, &c. (Out of which things God Almighty hath redeemed us, and hath brought us into his Covenant of Peace, and unto his Mountain of Holiness, where nothing hurts nor destroyes) yet we know that the Lord is with us, & on our side, and takes our part, will plead our Cause and fight for us, and he is stronger than you all; and his Power is above yours, and our trust and confidence is in him

alone, and not in the arm of flesh: and its in vain for you to strive against him, or to oppose or resist him; for he will in the end be too hard for you, and will break you to pieces as a Potters vessel of clay, except you repent.

And now Friends, there is but one only way by which you may or can possibly escape and prevent the dreadful Judgments of the Lord, or by which his Anger may be appeased which is kindled against you, and that is this; *To humble your selves before the Lord, and to repent of the Evil of your Doings, and to loose the Bands of Iniquity, and to undo the heavy Burdens, and let the Oppressed go free, and turn the Sword against the Evil-doers, and suppress Vice and Profaneness, and do not tolerate Licentiousness and these wicked Practices (as Rioting, Drunkenness, Stage-plays, and the like) which day by day even greatly abounds in your Streets, while the Servants of the Lord lie in noisome Holes and Prisons; And give Liberty of Conscience unto the People of God to worship him (which is the main thing that I contend with you for) that the Servants of the Lord may have free Liberty to labour for the reducing of People from those afore-mentioned, and all other Vices, which tend to the destruction of Youth, and to the destroying both of soul and body: And this is the way for you (if there be any) to purchase the good-will and favour of God, and to be established in safety and security in your Government; and if any (who are self-seekers and time-servers) shall (for self-ends) counsel you other-ways, such (you shall know in the day of the Lord) are evil Counsellors, and ought not to be received by you, but denied.*

And Friends, one thing more I would present to your Consideration, which hath been oft laid before you in times past, and as oft forgotten by you, that is this; *What hath been the ground and original cause of all the late Overturnings which have been in this Nation? if it be rightly weighed and considered, will it not appear that Cruelty and Oppression of mens Consciences in matters relating to the Service of God, was the main original Cause thereof?* I confess I cannot but marvel that you should be so blinded (with your present prosperity) that you cannot see and consider these things, and labour to avoid that which was the cause of their overthrow and ruine that are gone before you, but to run on so headlong and inconsiderate, as though you were hating with desire to bring the Wrath of God upon you: For mark Friends, when did any escape the hand of God in any Age or Generation, or where were any established in safety that took in hand this work of Oppression, and persecuting the Seed of God and his People? Consider from *Pharaoh* (that great Oppressor) unto this day, and you will find that in all ages, this work of Persecuting and oppressing the People of God, was the very Cause of the overthrow and ruine of the Persecutors; as for instance, the great Persecution and Cruelty that was exercised by the then Powers of the Nation in *Queen Maries* dayes; what was the issue thereof? Was it not the very overthrow and rooting out of that Persecuting Power, Religion, and Faith? &c. And doth not their name (who exercised that Cruelty) remain as an ill savour unto all sober People (truly fearing God) unto this day? And could they by all their Tyranny then exercised, root out or extinguish that Faith and Religion, that they then strook at? Nay, they could not, though it was but (as I may say) the beginning of Reformation and coming out of the Apostasie; but its true indeed, they Killed, Destroyed, and Murdered many, but blessed be the Lord that did not shake the rest so, as to make them fall, but rather establish them. And certainly Friends, although you should be permitted (as they were) to destroy many of us by your Laws and Decrees made, or to be made, yet you cannot thereby destroy the Faith of others, neither can you possibly accomplish your desire, nor root out the holy Seed which is now sprung and risen, and must replenish Nations, and cause the Desolate places to be inhabited, though indeed you may thereby root out and destroy yourselves; which is sad to consider.

So Friends, much more might be said unto you, and many sound Reasons and Arguments might be produced to convince you, how unsafe it is for you to persevere in this work of Persecution and Cruelty, but I know you will (many of you, if not most of you) kick against it, and harden your hearts, and will not believe; wherefore I have chosen rather to be as brief as I may, only to discharge my Conscience to you in the sight of the Lord, that I may be clear of your blood, and so shall conclude even with a few words, telling you, *that this work which you have begun, and put your hand unto, will be too hard for you; for when did ever any yet rise up against the Lord and prosper? Or do you think to prevail against the Ancient of Dayes, although your Predecessors could not? O nay, it cannot be. But then you will say, that it is not the Work of God that you oppose, but Heresie and Sedition, &c. I answer; So said your Predecessors, the Persecutors in all Generations, when they slew the Prophets, and crucified the Son of God, and persecuted the Apostles; they charged them with Blasphemy and Sedition, and Turners of the World upside down, and said, the Earth was not able to bear them, &c. Yet that would not be a sufficient excuse for them in the day when God took Vengeance, neither will it be a sufficient excuse for you in the day when you must (all without respect of persons) give an account unto God for all your deeds done in the body: Wherefore beware lest that come upon you, which was spoken by the Prophet of old, saying, Behold ye Despisers, and wonder, and perish, for I work a Work in your dayes, a Work which you can in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you.*

Written at Kingstone
upon Thames the
5th of the 9th
Month, 1664.

I am a Friend to the whole Creation of God, and have the mind of the Spirit of the Lord, who wills not the Death or Destruction of any, but rather that all should return and live.

J. C.